

SENATE JUDICIARY
TEST NO. 15
2/2/11
SB/RS

Hello my name is Carolyn Madplume, and I thank you for giving me the time to speak today in favor of SB 185. I am here as a mother of a murder victim. My daughter, Catherine and her friend Gerald Sirucek were murdered in 2005.

Four bullets pierced her body and her friend was shot and his throat was cut.

I am here today to tell you to repeal the death penalty and put the state's energy and resources into helping victims. I am so tired of the criminal justice system only concentrating on what to do with the criminal and forgetting about the victims. The death penalty is just the most extreme example of that.

Millions of dollars of resources go to putting only a few people to death. Let me tell you about the victims that aren't getting those resources and whose needs are not being met.

When my daughter was murdered, I could not get any information about what was going on. Other people heard on the news that a terrible crime had taken place and members of my community thought my daughter may have been a victim.

I had called our tribal police to find out what was going on. I traveled to the county sheriff's office to look for information. It took a day and a half and pressure from a local probation officer for me to confirm that it was my daughter who was murdered.

I was so scared and confused when the court proceedings started for the killers of my beautiful girl. I didn't understand the process or what was going on. Her death was part of an execution-style double homicide, and the death penalty was mentioned, but no one ever talked to me about it. I went to the hearings and proceedings, but I didn't know what was going on, and I had no one to ask.

Once, I traveled to a hearing and it had been cancelled. No one bothered to call and tell me, and no one was there when I got there to let me know what was going on.



Cherish Your Dreams

follow your passions they are
the guiding hands of your
heart.

*(lines from a poem written by
Catherine Mad Plume)*



BEWARE! One Night of Alcohol & Drug Use can lead to becoming a victim of a violent crime. Life Is Too Short, Think Before You Drink! It can happen to you, she didn't think it would, but her young life was cut short. She thought like all young adults thought, "It Won't Happen To Me!" but it did.

*In Memory of Catherine Mad Plume
Victim of a Homicide
January 11, 1985 - February 3, 2005*



A victims' advocate came to talk to me a couple of times but she dealt with domestic violence and didn't know anything about my daughter's case or a murder trial.

There was no homicide victims advocate to help me through this terrible time. There was no one asking me if I had any questions or help me talk to the prosecutors. There was no one whose job it was to get me the crucial facts I wanted to know about my own daughter's murder.

Gerald's mother knew even less than me. She would call me to get information about what was happening with the case and what things meant, but I had no idea.

I heard from the funeral director that there had been a rape test performed on my daughter, but no one told me about it until I asked.

I know the prosecutor had to deal with the case, and trials are stressful. But I wish there had been someone there whose job it was to see what I needed and give me support through the horrible time. I didn't even know about the plea deals until they had already been offered and accepted.

When you lose a loved one to murder, when you find out who did it, you're really angry, and you want something bad to happen to them. You want them punished. When I started going to church, and learned the ten commandments, thou shalt not kill or take another's life, I realized that applies to the death penalty too.

I will never forget and will always honor my beautiful daughter's life. Through her death, I hope to share the lesson that surviving family members need support, not the empty promise of the death penalty. I choose life and hope and compassion for victims as my daughter's legacy and hope you will join me in rejecting capital punishment.